State Energy Program

Promoting Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) State Energy Program (SEP) provides grants and technical assistance to states and U.S. territories to promote energy conservation and reduce the growth of energy demand. SEP is the only DOE program that supports outreach from DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy for all technologies and all market sectors. The network of state energy offices that SEP supports targets the portfolio of energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies ready for market. In a typical year, projects in SEP state plans save over $300,000,000 in energy costs.

Since its inception SEP has distributed financial assistance to states and territories through formula grants so they can develop cost-shared energy efficiency and renewable energy projects that meet their unique energy needs and are consistent with national energy goals. The projects represent all EERE technologies and encompass every sector of the economy: state facilities, transportation, industry, local communities, schools, hospitals, businesses and residences. Projects also focus on innovative financing solutions to increase access to capital, e.g. performance contracting, and revolving loan funds. States develop strategic and annual energy plans, which identify strategies and project opportunities. DOE partners with states to identify specific needs for technical assistance that support state goals and help overcome information, policy, and market barriers to successful projects.

In 1997 the SEP was expanded to include "special projects." This increase in scope allows competitive state solicitations to be issued when there is available funding within EERE offices. State energy offices partner with other organizations and contribute their own funding to maximize DOE funding. Other EERE activities such as Clean Cities and Building Codes and Standards are supported through SEP special projects. In 2007 DOE funded six SEP special projects to implement EPAct 2005, Section 140, to develop or expand energy efficiency programs; four projects to demonstrate the air quality benefits of energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies; and, three projects to support interstate trading of renewable energy credits.

SEP special projects grants are an ideal vehicle to implement sections of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA).

Meeting the National Energy Challenges

Through SEP, states target their efforts toward both near-term deployment of energy efficiency and renewable technologies and long-term market transformation – strategic interventions that cause lasting change in the way we use our energy resources. States are uniquely situated to bring about lasting change through adoption of energy efficiency and renewable energy portfolio standards, advanced energy-efficient building codes, sustainable community and land-use planning, and implementing innovative energy efficiency and renewable energy policies, practices, technologies and programs.

States are promoting an integrated portfolio of energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions to meet U.S. energy security, economic growth, and environmental quality objectives. The SEP also supports strategic partnerships with organizations representing governors, state and utility policymakers, local government leaders and private industry to identify common objectives and to leverage DOE's outreach efforts.

While designing and carrying out energy programs that meet individual state needs, the states are also helping to meet national energy objectives, contributing to President Bush's alternative fuel production goals in EISA, and the Advanced Energy Initiative, which is aimed at accelerating the development of new clean energy technologies.

Preparing for Energy Emergencies

The SEP requires states to develop plans for handling energy emergencies. DOE's Office of Energy Assurance and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security also share these plans. State energy offices, supported in part with SEP funds, form a vital infrastructure for handling energy emergencies delivering energy benefits, addressing national energy goals, and coordinating energy-related emergency preparedness across the nation.

Program flexibility allows states to use SEP funding to help with disaster recovery and to develop energy infrastructure that resists damage from severe natural disasters. For example, in 2005, the Florida Energy Office supported construction of a demonstration home that resists flood damage during hurricanes, generates its own electricity during power outages, and is much more energy efficient than standard homes.

SEP's partnership with the states is critical to DOE's efforts to increase the use of clean energy across the nation and to implement EISA 2007.

A Strong Energy Portfolio for a Strong America

Energy efficiency and clean, renewable energy will mean a stronger economy, a cleaner environment, and greater energy independence for America. Working with a wide array of state, community, industry, and university partners, the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy invests in a diverse portfolio of energy technologies.

U.S. Department of Energy

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

Bringing you a prosperous future where energy is clean, abundant, reliable, and affordable

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